ABSTRACT

Method and Apparatus for Processing Free-Format Data

A method and apparatus for processing free-format data (301) to produce a "text object" associated with the

5   free-format data. The text object comprises a plurality of "component nodes" (302-312) containing attribute-type identifiers for elements of the free-format text and other data facilitating access to the text object to obtain information and/or change or add the free-format data.

10 This arrangement obviates the need for the provision of separate database fields for each element of the information. Free-format data can therefore be processed in a similar manner to the way a human being processes free-format data. All elements can be accessed via the

15 constructed text object.